

SENATE BILL REPORT

ESB 6376

As Passed Senate, February 14, 2006

Title: An act relating to livestock inspection fees.

Brief Description: Changing livestock inspection fee provisions.

Sponsors: Senators Rasmussen, Honeyford, Jacobsen, Shin, Morton and Delvin.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Agriculture & Rural Economic Development: 1/17/06, 1/19/06 [DP, w/oRec].

Passed Senate: 2/14/06, 46-0.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE & RURAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Majority Report: Do pass.

Signed by Senators Rasmussen, Chair; Shin, Vice Chair; Delvin, Jacobsen, Morton and Sheldon.

Minority Report: That it be referred without recommendation.

Signed by Senator Schoesler, Ranking Minority Member.

Staff: Bob Lee (786-7404)

Background: Historically, the livestock identification program involves inspection of livestock at mandatory inspection points to verify ownership. This information is now also being used to trace the movement of livestock for animal health related investigations. This program is funded by fees.

The Livestock Identification Advisory Board is composed of representatives of major segments of the livestock industry. This board advises the Director of Agriculture regarding the administration of the program and related inspection and licensing fees.

The livestock industry is engaged in the development of the National Animal Identification System to be able to conduct a trace-back of diseased livestock within 48 hours of discovery.

Summary of Bill: The current inspection fee of 85 cents per head is increased to \$1.60, or time and mileage, whichever is greater, for cattle that are not identified in conformance with the department's rules. This fee also applies to cattle whose change of ownership is documented through the use of a self-inspection certificate.

For cattle that are identified in conformance with the department's rules and with rules established by the director, the fee is \$1.10, or time and mileage, whichever is greater. This fee does not apply to inspection of cattle when documenting a change of ownership with a self-inspection certificate.

The fee for inspection of cattle at a federally inspected processing plant with a daily capacity of less than 500 head is \$4 per head. The option to charge time and mileage does not apply to this category, nor does the minimum \$5 fee for issuance of an inspection certificate.

The per head audit fee for feed lots is increased from 17 cents to 25 cents. The maximum number of head of cattle whose sale may be documented through self-inspection certificates is increased from 15 to 25 head.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Available.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: The bill contains an emergency clause and takes effect on June 1, 2006.

Testimony For: With the increased transparency of agency fiscal information, and with the emerging requirements to integrate the present livestock identification system with the new National Animal Identification System, industry segments, for the first time, are united in their support of the fees necessary to maintain the current program. Incentives are provided to growers to identify their livestock not only for ownership purpose, but also for animal disease trace-back purposes.

Testimony Against: None.

Who Testified: PRO: Ed Field, Washington Cattle Feeders Association; Jack Field, Washington Cattlemen's Association; Neil Kayser; Jim Sizemore; Jay Gordon, Washington Dairy Federation.